

REMARKS

There are now pending in this application claims 1-9 and 12-15, of which claims 1 and 15 are independent. Claims 10 and 11 have been cancelled without prejudice or waiver of their subject matter. No claims have been added.

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance of the above application is respectfully sought.

The invention as set forth in independent claim 1 is directed to a sheet material information detecting apparatus which comprises a sheet feeding means for feeding an anisotropic sheet material, a correcting means for correcting the position of the fed sheet material to bring the orientation direction of the constituting material of the sheet material to be in a prescribed direction relative to the feed direction of the sheet material, an external force applying means for applying a mechanical external force to the sheet material in the corrected position, a signal detecting means for detecting a signal from the sheet material and an information acquiring means for acquiring information on the stress caused by the applied external force in the sheet material.

Independent claim 15 is directed to a process for acquiring information on an anisotropic sheet material and comprises the steps of correcting the position of a fed sheet material to bring the orientation direction of the constituting material of the sheet material to be in a prescribed direction relative to the feed direction of the sheet material, applying a mechanical external force to the sheet material in the corrected position and acquiring information on the stress caused by the applied external force in the sheet material.

Each of independent claim 1 and 15, as well as claims 2-5, 10, 11, 13, and 14,

were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Tomita, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,852,499). In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the rejections is respectfully traversed.

Tomita, et al. is directed to an image forming apparatus which includes a device for optically detecting the orientation of a paper sheet. In accordance with the disclosure of this reference, a luminous flux light beam is made incident on the paper from a diagonal direction and the diffused reflection distribution is measured so as to determine the fiber orientation of the paper.

Applicants' invention is distinct in a number of respects. First, in the present invention a mechanical force is applied to a sheet material to detect that the resulting signal from the sheet material of the present invention, while Tomita, et al. operates based on a luminous flux incident and measures the diffused reflection distribution. Moreover, in the present invention, there is provided means of correcting the oblique advance of the sheet material, and such feature is not understood to be taught or suggested by Tomita, et al. The Examiner identifies member 11 of Tomita, et al. as corresponding to that correcting means. However, portion 11, which is shown in Figure 9, is a paper rotating unit and serves as a means for transferring the paper 5 to a unit 10 for sensing a fiber orientation of the paper, but does not correct the oblique advance of the sheet material. More specifically, the portion 11 does not correct the position of the fed sheet material to bring the orientation direction of the constituting material of the sheet material to be in a prescribed direction relative to the feed direction of the sheet material.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Tomita, et al. discloses neither the correcting of the position of a fed sheet material to bring the orientation

direction of the sheet material to be in a prescribed direction relative to the feed direction or the application of a mechanical external force to the sheet material in the correcting position. It is therefore respectfully submitted that each of claims 1 and 15 is patentable over Tomita, et al.

Chase and Aggdur, et al. were cited in combination with Tomita, et al. against several of the dependent claims. However, neither of the secondary references are understood to meet the above-discussed shortcomings of Tomita, et al.

Applicants therefore respectfully submit that each of independent claim 1 and 15 is patentable over the applied art of record. The remaining claims in the above application are dependent claims which depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are therefore patentable over the art of record for reasons noted above with respect to claim 1. In addition, each recite features of the invention still further distinguishing it from the applied art. Favorable and independent consideration thereof is respectfully sought.

Applicants respectfully submit that all outstanding matters in the above application have been addressed and that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and early passage to issue of the above application is respectfully sought.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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